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A New Plague on Science: The Pseudo-Muckrakers

As self-appointed, and senior, warden of the ethical purity of the scientific community, SGR yields to none in delectation over professional transgressions by its inhabitants. However, having pioneered in revelations of rascality, we must now regretfully note that a bit of a bandwagon is in motion. As a result, the public is being treated to the notion that scientific research is now the preserve of latterday Dillingers and Capones, whereas, in fact, it is the relatively high ethical standards of science that make the occasional lapse so noteworthy.

For evidence of this turn of events, we direct attention to recent articles in two usually sensible publications, *The New York Times*, and the British weekly *New Scientist*.

In the first, on January 22, we find an item headed, "Cheating in Science," authored by Ernest Borek, professor of microbiology at the University of Colorado Medical Center. Referring to the recent overblown episodes of faked research results at the Sloan-Kettering Institute for Cancer Research and that Harvard lad who doctored his medical school recommendations and thus cast doubt on a research project for which he was employed as a lab assistant, Borek arrives at the cosmic conclusion that: "Unfortunately, those of us in the biological sciences know that these two cases are but the tip of the iceberg. Increasing numbers of faked data, or, less flagrantly, data with 'body English' put on them, make their way into the scientific journals."

And then, referring back to the days when he was on the frontlines of ethical enforcement, he reports, "A former student of mine, now the head of an important laboratory, still berates me fifteen years after earning his doctorate for the ulcers I caused him by demanding what he thought were endless repetitions of an unexpected finding."

Well, all we can say is that if the good Dr. Borek possesses evidence of "faked evidence" making its way into the scientific literature, we trust that he will abstain from obstruction of science and bring the matter to the attention of the proper authorities. If the matter is, shall we say, delicate, SGR volunteers to serve as an intermediary, with assurance of full protection of confidentiality. For verifiable cases we'll even toss in a premium of a complimentary SGR subscription, which, at our exorbitant price, is no small matter these days.

The *New Scientist* contribution to public misunderstanding of science is the work of one Dr. Sue Denim, otherwise unidentified, and appears under the

non-committal title of "Dirty Tricks in Science," in the issue of December 26, 1974. It commences with the observation that "Even the most Junior Scientists—research students— may be involved in swindles, either as willing pawns in a complicated game in which they are exploited by their supervisors, or as pure passengers who will obtain their PhDs without any contribution of substance on their own part." It then moves on to report that "Great Men have been known to publish over 100 papers per year by affixing their names to every paper published by their large teams of assistants."

Now, we may be going out on limb, but SGR hereby offers to provide a complimentary subscription to this precious sheet for the first person who can steer us to any scientist who, over the past 25 years, has affixed his name to 300 or more papers in any five-year period.

We have no aversion to muckraking, but it seems to us that a good deal of the presentday muck is in the publications of alarmist vigilantes who, under the banner of purity, are sanctimoniously equating parking violations with mass murder. The established institutions of science should, of course, make certain that their own skirts are unblemished, but once having done so, they ought to make these folks come forth with details or shut up. —DSG

In Brief

With Vice President Rockefeller heavily occupied with soothing public concerns about domestic gumshoeing by the CIA, his assignment to study White House science advice (SGR Vol. V, No. 2) is lagging behind schedule. On December 21, the White House said Ford had asked him to make recommendations "in a month or so." Last week, he met with Science Adviser H. Guyford Stever for over an hour, but one of Stever's close aides told SGR, "Don't expect anything to happen soon."

Further evidence of still another boom-bust-boom cycle for the engineering profession: *Business Week* quotes the chairman of National Personnel Consultants, a network of consulting firms, to the effect that the supply of engineers is shrinking about 16,000 per year at the current level of demand. It's an "engineer's paradise and an employer's nightmare," he's quoted as saying.

R&D to Feel Ripple Effect of House Shakeup

Although the carnage among senior House Democrats has not extended to the chairmen of committees which have primary responsibility for science and technology, some of the changes in the Congressional power structure caused by last month's assault on the seniority system are of more than passing interest to the scientific community.

Most noteworthy is the replacement of 73-year-old F. Edward Hebert (D-La.) by 70-year-old Melvin Price (D-Ill.) as chairman of the House Armed Services Committee. Coming after a distinguished career of tending faithfully to the needs of the Pentagon, Herbert's ouster will result in a change of power in the Committee which has legislative authority over more than half of the federal government's R&D activities.

Though Price is not a harsh critic of the Pentagon, he is at least more independent-minded than Herbert, and he can also be expected to run the committee less autocratically. It is worth noting, for example, that it was Price's Armed Services Subcommittee which, in October 1973, held groundbreaking public hearings on the Army's chemical warfare policies.

Equally important is the fact that Price is the ranking House Democrat on the Joint Committee on Atomic Energy (JCAE). Since the chairmanship of the JCAE alternates every two years between the Senate and the

House, Price would normally assume that post in 1977, but his chairmanship of Armed Services will preclude him from doing so. A possible contender for the JCAE spot is Teno Roncalio (D-Wyo.) who ranks high in seniority on the JCAE, and who has been an outspoken critic of several AEC programs, particularly Plowshare.

Another important change by last month's power struggles is that Jamie Whitten (D-Miss.) was forced to drop responsibility for EPA and consumer protection agencies from the jurisdiction of his Appropriations Subcommittee, in order to head off a challenge to his chairmanship. Those responsibilities have been picked up by the Subcommittee chaired by Edward P. Boland (D-Mass.), much to the delight of EPA.

Whitten, who was given a rating of 5 per cent by the League of Conservation Voters last year, reflects his cotton farming constituents' fondness for pesticides and has attempted on several occasions to restrict EPA programs. Among his achievements is a clause written into last year's House version of the EPA appropriations bill directing the agency to refrain from taking actions which might result in increases in the cost of electricity or food. Boland, by contrast, was given a rating of 65 per cent by the League of Conservation Voters last year, which puts him higher than any other chairman of a House appropriations subcommittee.

Herbert Ouster May Effect New Military Medical School

The widely unmourned dethronement of Rep. F. Edward Hebert (D-La.) as chairman of the House Armed Services Committee is not likely to contribute to the well being of his most monumental pet project, the just-started construction of a military medical school that bears the title of the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences.

Generally regarded as one of the more harebrained extravagances in the federal inventory, the scheme was espoused by Hebert for 25 years, but never was taken seriously until he became chairman of the Committee in 1971. Administration health planners attacked the proposal as an extraordinarily expensive means of producing physicians for the armed services. Though wildly varying cost estimates were being flung about, they pointed out that, whether the University ultimately cost \$100 million or \$250 million to build, it was an expensive way to turn out the 100 physicians a year that it was expected to graduate 10 years after groundbreaking. It would be faster and cheaper to provide federal fellowships, tied to military service, for medical students at existing schools, they poin-

ted out. Hebert, however, prevailed, since, as chairman of Armed Services, he had a good deal to say about the disposition of the Pentagon's budget, a fact that caused a majority of his colleagues to perceive the merit of his monumental plan.

With \$20 million for starters, the University has now started construction of a campus on the grounds of the National Naval Medical Center, Bethesda, Md. Meanwhile, it is occupying borrowed facilities for its first class, 36 students who will start next fall.

The practice of doing in the personal projects of departed leaders is not without precedent on Capitol Hill. The grandiose Mohole scheme, it may be recalled, was going along smoothly, until the unexpected death in 1966 of its Congressional guardian, Rep. Albert Thomas, chairman of the appropriations subcommittee that paid for the scheme, and in whose Houston district resided the prime contractor. Shortly after Mr. Thomas' colleagues recovered from their bereavement, they voted to terminate the project.

House Science Committee Revamped for Energy Role

The House Committee on Science and Technology has completed a sweeping reorganization of its subcommittee structure in line with its newly acquired responsibilities for energy and environmental R&D, and its theoretical role as overseer of all the federal government's science and technology programs outside of military and nuclear activities.

The Committee now has seven subcommittees, only one of which deals exclusively with NASA affairs — the area which, in the past, has been its chief responsibility. Called the Subcommittee on Space Science and Applications, it will be chaired by Don Fuqua (D-Fla.), a longtime Committee member who used to keep an eye on manned space activities.

Two subcommittees will be concerned with energy R&D, which will probably now become the Committee's most prominent concern. One, called the Subcommittee on Energy Research, Development and Demonstration, will be chaired by Mike McCormack (D-Wash.), while the other, which will be concerned with fossil fuel technology, will be chaired by Ken Hechler (D-W.Va).

Though the Committee has, in the past, had authority to write bills only for NASA, NSF and the National Bureau of Standards, it has nevertheless gotten deep into energy R&D by holding special "oversight" hearings on energy affairs. Now, however, it has legislative authority over all-nuclear programs of the Energy Research and Development Administration (ERDA), making it the chief focus of non-nuclear energy R&D affairs in the House. One factor yet to be resolved is how McCormack's subcommittee will relate to the Joint Committee on Atomic Energy in handling ERDA.

As for Hechler's subcommittee, it is likely to concentrate on coal conversion and mining technologies; since Hechler is an ardent foe of strip mining, he is unlikely to resist the opportunity of getting a lever in that area.

The Committee's new responsibilities for environmental R&D will be consolidated into a Subcommittee on Environment and the Atmosphere, under the chairmanship of George E. Brown Jr. (D-Calif.). Brown, who issued a statement last week suggesting that "many of our environmental problems have been caused by our modern, industrial society's abuse of technology," has already spoken out against the Ford Administration proposal to freeze auto emission standards for five years in exchange for a promise from Detroit to improve gasoline consumption. He is also expected to take a close look at the recent allegations of management problems in the R&D office of the Environmental Protection Agency.

Bill Introduced to Restore Title of Oak Ridge Lab

Indignation has erupted in Tennessee over the bill, quietly passed by Congress last December, which renamed the Oak Ridge National Laboratory (ORNL) in honor of former Rep. Chet Holifield (SGR Vol. V, No 1). Rep. Marilyn Lloyd, supported by four other members of Tennessee's Congressional delegation, has introduced a bill to reinstate "the historic name of the Oak Ridge National Laboratory" and instead to change the name of the Clinch River Breeder Reactor, also at Oak Ridge, to the Holifield Liquid Metal Fast Breeder Reactor.

In introducing the bill, Lloyd said that it "properly acknowledges Representative Holifield's contributions to the nuclear energy field and specifically recognizes his interest and support of the fast breeder reactor program." Since the breeder demonstration plant has already encountered projected cost overruns amounting to some \$1 billion, and its popularity within the Administration seems to be on the wane, Holifield's colleagues will probably prefer the less controversial ORNL as a monument.

Dale Milford, a second-term member from Texas, has been given the chairmanship of a subcommittee dealing with civil aviation R&D, including the aeronautics work undertaken by NASA.

Finally, the Committee's science policy roles will be carried out by two subcommittees. One, called the Science, Research and Technology Subcommittee, will be chaired by James Symington (D-Mo.). Its responsibilities include legislative oversight of NSF and the Bureau of Standards, together with matters of general science policy. The other, called the Subcommittee on Domestic and International Science Planning and Analysis, has been established to perform the special oversight role that has been assigned to the full committee.

Though its program is still being worked out, the oversight subcommittee could, in theory at least, play an important role in monitoring the federal government's scientific programs since it has considerable freedom in choosing which topics to study. The chairmanship has been assigned to Robert A. Roe (D-N.J.), who has not exactly made his name a household word during the five years he has spent in Congress.

SST Isn't Yet in the Clear on Ozone Hazard

Contrary to many press reports, the Department of Transportation's (DOT) recently released \$20-million study of the environmental effects of operating a fleet of SSTs in the stratosphere has not disproved the charges of the health hazards which helped Congress kill the Boeing SST four years ago.

The study indicates that the hazards can be controlled by some costly engine modifications, but it notes that international regulations will be needed to ensure that such modifications are implemented and it leaves plenty of room for argument over how strict those regulations should be. The longstanding dispute over the environmental safety of SSTs is therefore clearly far from over.

The study's first conclusion, which was seized upon by many reporters, is that the SSTs now in operation or already scheduled to come into service will not have any detectable effect on the environment. But, since there will be a maximum of about only 30 flying by 1980 (about 16 Anglo-French Concorde and 14 TU-144s), that conclusion is not surprising.

The study, however, goes on to note that if the SST fleet expands rapidly without strict limits on engine emissions, it would lead to "serious consequences." Moreover, the problem isn't confined to SSTs, for high-flying subsonic aircraft could also cause some health hazards.

Allegations about the environmental safety of SSTs were first raised in 1970, at the height of the Senate debate on whether the government should support development of an American SST. The nub of the argument, raised chiefly by Harold Johnston of the University of California, is that oxides of nitrogen in SST exhausts will attack the ozone layer which shields the Earth from harsh ultraviolet radiation, the ultimate consequence of which would be an increase in the incidence of skin cancer.

The DOT study, which was ordered by Congress when those allegations were made, states that a cause-and-effect relationship has indeed been established between the operation of an SST fleet with given engine characteristics and an increase in ultraviolet radiation reaching the earth's surface. In other words, there's nothing essentially wrong with Johnston's theory. But the consequences of an increase in ultraviolet flux, such as the effect on the number of cases of cancer, isn't so well established, the study notes.

In brief, the study reckons that about 125 Concorde-type SSTs flying for about four and a half hours a day in the stratosphere would deplete the ozone layer by about 0.5 percent - the smallest change that could be detected. Such a depletion would raise ultraviolet flux

by about one percent. The effect on the ozone layer would be greater, however, with more advanced SSTs designed to fly at higher altitudes.

To keep such effects to a minimum, and to allow for expansion in both the SST fleet and the high-flying subsonic fleet, engines may have to be redesigned to emit smaller amounts of oxides of nitrogen, the study indicates. Though engine manufacturers are confident that they could produce cleaner engines, it would take up to 15 years to develop the technology and the effort would cost about \$50 million for each type of engine. In view of that long lead time, the study notes, "the process of establishing and meeting standards should start now."

Although that sounds a reasonable enough suggestion, SST manufacturers are sure to ask whether it is worth the cost. For a start, the thickness of the ozone layer varies by about 300 percent between the poles and the equator and the layer can vary at any given locality by up to 25 percent from day to day. So what difference would a mere 0.5 percent change make to human health?

The clincher is this: through the exact effect of a given increase in ultraviolet radiation on the incidence of skin cancer is not easy to establish, there is strong evidence from a variety of sources to indicate that harsh ultraviolet radiation is at least one factor which causes the most common type of skin cancer. If it is assumed that it is the only factor, then a one percent increase in ultraviolet flux reaching the earth (caused by a 0.5 percent reduction in the ozone layer) might cause a one-percent increase in the number of cases of skin cancer. For the United States, that translates to about 5,000 cases a year.

Pollack Takes GWU Post

Herman Pollack, who retired last year after a decade as director of the State Department's Bureau of International Scientific and Technological Affairs, has been appointed research professor of international affairs in The George Washington University's Graduate Program in Science, Technology, and Public Policy.

According to an announcement by the University, the appointment is supported by the Science and Technology Policy Office of the National Science Foundation, and Pollack plans to do research on the management of US science and technology programs and US participation in international organizations that conduct scientific and technological programs.

Senate Committee Skeptical of Alleged Soviet R&D Prowess

The Defense Department's annual warning of vast and wondrous R&D activities in the Soviet Union is going to be subjected to more than routine scrutiny this year by a subcommittee of the Senate Armed Services Committee.

The instigation for this step was a recent *Washington Post* series which reported what has often been said by persons well-acquainted with Soviet science and technology, namely, that it is bureaucratically cumbersome, of dubious quality in many fields, and, though with many achievements to its credit, generally lagging behind the US. On the basis of these conclusions, Senator Thomas J. McIntyre (D-N.H.), chairman of the Research and Development Subcommittee, informed Malcolm Currie, the Pentagon research chief, that he won't settle for the customary scare stories when DoD seeks money this year.

The articles, he wrote to Currie on January 8, "appear to refute earlier statements by Defense witnesses of how the US is lagging behind the Soviets in specific areas and how their accelerating momentum is widening the gap....

"I consider it highly important," McIntyre continued, "that generalizations not be used to com-

pare US and Soviet capabilities, but that specific facts supported with hard evidence be available. Without these, the best case cannot be made for a strong technology program.

"I am concerned that the presentation to be made to the Congress on Soviet vs. US technology be completely objective, be an accurate representation of US intelligence findings, and depict clearly the basis and methodology used in forecasting trends for discrete technologies and discrete equipment or categories of equipment.

"The extent to which such forecasts are the result of specific studies conducted under contract or in-house should be identified and explained."

In placing his letter to Currie in the *Congressional Record*, McIntyre included an introduction which noted the DOD practice of "profound announcements regarding the Soviet threat"—used in time for the budget season, which is now upon us. "Some of these (announcements) are factual," McIntyre added, "some are exaggerations, and some are questionable, but all are very loud....I would strongly counsel my colleagues, and especially the new members of both the House and Senate, to view these pronouncements in their true perspective and consider them very carefully."

OTA Plans Two Quick Studies to Aid Budget Evaluation

The Congressional Office of Technology Assessment (OTA) has announced plans for a couple of quickie studies aimed at helping the House and Senate appropriations committees in their examination of the Administration's newly proposed budget. The public announcement of the studies, following a bit of sniping at OTA for the leisurely startup pace of its first year, stresses that the findings will be available within a few months, rather than the two to three years that OTA has scheduled for most of its endeavors.

The first of the studies, due to be completed in March, is titled the Crash Recorder Program Evaluation, and was requested by, among others, Rep. George H. Mahon (D-Tex.), chairman of the House Appropriations Committee, in connection with a budget request by the National Highway Traffic and Safety Administration (NHTSA). The agency, which sets safety standards for automobile occupants, wants to install 100,000 crash recorders in automobiles to measure the physical forces involved in collisions and how they relate to injuries. According to the OTA announcement, the Appropriations Committee, "noting the energy consumption and consumer cost implications

of structural modifications which add to the weight of automobiles, asked that OTA examine the need for additional auto crash data, and to assess the approaches suggested by NHTSA for obtaining such information."

The study will be performed for OTA by Economics and Science Planning, Inc., of Washington, D.C., under a \$42,905 contract.

The other study, also to be completed in March, concerns Personal Rapid Transport (PRT), and was requested by Chairman John L. McClellan (D-Ark.), chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, on behalf of Senators Robert C. Byrd (D-W. Va.) and Clifford P. Case (R-N.J.). The study, covering computerized monorails, automated electric buses operating in exclusive pathways, and "demand-response" small vehicles, "will assess the potential of PRT as a cost-effective transportation mode worthy of continued government research, development, and demonstration support."

OTA said the assessment will be conducted by various consultants and public agencies under the direction of the OTA staff.

Weizmann Institute Working on No-Contact Lie Detector

Israel's Weizmann Institute continues to report progress in the development of a device that should open new frontiers for official mischief and invasion of privacy—a lie detector that requires no physical contact with the person under scrutiny.

The device, which the Institute's Department of Electronics is developing for the Police Criminal Identification Bureau, is described as employing microwave signals to measure the effect of respiration on chest movements. Conventional polygraphs require attachment of pneumatic tubes to the subject's body for this purpose. According to an announcement from the Institute, "Besides the discomfort sometimes caused by the bellowed tubes, their sensitivity depends on such variable idiosyncracies as an examinee's obesity, breathing patterns and tightness of underwear....Small enough to be

housed in an attache case, the microwave respiration monitor overcomes many of the disadvantages of the pneumograph and provides much greater sensitivity. The Institute engineering group," the announcement continued, "is now refining the latest prototype instrument and is developing a similar device for remote monitoring of pulse—a further step toward the final goal: a completely contactless and reliable polygraph."

Apart from the expression of solicitude for the discomfort sometimes caused by conventional polygraphs, no explanation was given for the allocation of R&D resources to this project by hard-pressed Israel. But with internal Arab dissidence on the increase, it may be presumed that the assignment to the Weizmann engineers was not inspired by concern over shoplifting.

Press Conference on Nuclear Power Goes Critical

Although reporters attending a press conference, called last month in Washington by Nobel Laureate Hans Bethe, were left a bit confused about what Bethe was hoping to achieve, they were treated to a display of the animosity which has developed between critics and advocates of nuclear power.

The stated reason for the conference was release of a statement, endorsed by a raft of eminent scientists including 11 Nobel prizewinners, generally deploring the lack of a coherent government energy R&D policy and extolling the virtues of nuclear energy.

Beginning with the lugubrious assesment that "we, as scientists and citizens of the United States, believe that the Republic is in the most serious situation since World War II," the statement ranged over some of the reasons for the energy crisis, suggested that conservation is necessary but could cost jobs, endorsed expanded use of coal, and ended with the plea that "we can see no reasonable alternative to an increased use of nuclear power to satisfy our energy needs."

However, aside from its emphasis on the atom and coal as the solution to energy shortages, it offered no recommendations and simply read like a proclamation from the nation's technological elite.

Asked why he made the statement, Bethe replied that he had "felt for some years that nuclear energy was not getting enough emphasis" from the government. Which is surprising, since before Nixon launched Project Independence, atomic energy was carrying off the bulk of all energy R&D funds — and it still does. Bethe later stated, however, that he was encouraged by Ford's energy proposals, which were made the previous day.

Be that as it may, a spokesman for the Union of Concerned Scientists — the most outspoken group opposed to nuclear power—made a little speech at the press conference denouncing the statement. In response, he was told by the chairman, nuclear physicist Ralph Lapp, to "sit down and show some manners for once in your life."

He didn't. Instead, he distributed copies of a letter signed by Ralph Nader and endorsed by eight Nobel laureates which was sent that day to President Ford. The letter criticized the Administration's energy proposals for relying too heavily on nuclear power. Though some of the copies didn't reach the press because a batch was intercepted by a former AEC official, the press was left with no illusions about the intensity of the clash between the two groups.

Study Issued on OTA History

Watchers of the Office of Technology Assessment who would like to have a concise history of the deliberations that led up to the creation of the Office should take note of a study recently issued by the Congressional Research Service, "Public Participation and Technology Assessment, a Survey of the Legislative History of the Office of Technology Assessment." Written by Rosemary A. Chalk, a social sciences analyst in the CRS Science Policy Research Division, the study is not directly available to the public. But a request to any representative or senator is very likely to produce a copy. The identifying numbers of the study are: T 174 US, 74-166 SP.

Academy Board Backs HEW on Low-Cost Drugs

As a Congressionally chartered adviser to the federal government, the National Academy of Sciences usually speaks on public matters only upon invitation. But the Academy's Drug Research Board recently broke that tradition by entering unbidden into the controversy over drug prescription prices. It did so by going public with a resolution recommending that pharmacists, in certain instances, should be allowed to exercise their judgement and fill prescriptions with the cheapest brand available.

The resolution is noteworthy since it comes in the middle of a dispute between the Department of Health, Education and Welfare and the drug industry over the prices of drugs paid for under Medicare and Medicaid. HEW has announced that it intends to discontinue paying for many expensive brand-name drugs when there are cheaper, but equally effective, versions of those drugs on the market.

The HEW proposal, published in the *Federal Register* on November 15, relates only to those drugs which would not endanger the health of a patient if there is any difference in biological effects between different brands. But the drug industry is fighting the proposal with the argument that a higher price usually means a higher quality. The Drug Research Board's resolution can therefore be taken as an endorsement of HEW's proposed policy at a particularly useful moment.

The resolution is also noteworthy since it is almost diametrically opposed to a resolution which the Board was thinking of adopting less than 18 months ago.

Proceeding from the position that laws and regulations concerning drug prices should be aimed at enhancing the patient's welfare, "which in operational terms means the best product for the lowest cost," the Board's resolution states that "the physician, having selected the chemical entity to be used for therapy, should be required to delegate to the pharmacist, or explicitly to retain to himself, selection of the particular drug to be dispensed and received by the patient."

It is now illegal in all states except Florida and Michigan for a pharmacist to dispense a brand different from the one prescribed, even though exactly the same drug may be available at a lower price. The Drug

Research Board therefore wants the other 48 states to alter their regulations.

The resolution states, however, that it should be left to the physician to determine for each prescription whether the pharmacist should be permitted to substitute other brands of drugs. The effect, says a background statement on the resolution, is to "emphasize accountability of the health professionals involved...For the physician, he must be prepared to defend his decision to restrict the dispensed drug product to the specific brand named in his prescription, should he choose to require such a restriction. For the pharmacist, he must be prepared to defend his substitution of a cheaper drug product than a brand named in the prescription, should substitution be permitted by the physician."

Early in 1973, when the Board first began considering the matter, it believed that the anti-substitution laws provided protection for consumers against inferior products, but it eventually reversed that position.

Asked what caused the change of mind, Frederick E. Shideman, of the University of Minnesota, who chairs the Drug Research Board, said the Board "was educated" during the process of considering the resolution. Particularly influential, he said, was the realization that the anti-substitution laws can be altered without taking ultimate responsibility away from the physician, and the fact that some drugs sold at different prices under different brand names are made in the same laboratory by the same process and therefore should deliver exactly the same therapeutic dose.

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No Boat Rockers on New Nuclear Regulatory Commission

Congress indulged itself in a big flap last year to separate the promotion of nuclear energy from the regulation of nuclear safety. The result was that when the AEC was folded into the newly created Energy Research and Development Administration (ERDA), oversight of safety, formerly a captive function of the AEC, was assigned to a newly created Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC).

Nuclear enthusiasts naturally feared that anti-nuclear nuts might attain representation on the NRC. But, the Congressional attention span being limited, the situation has been deftly dealt with by President Ford, who has appointed a quintet of trustworthy technocrats to the new watchdog organization. It is doubtful that they will cause much trouble for ERDA or the nuclear power industry, which has plenty of troubles as it is, with more to come (SGR Vol. IV, No. 19).

The chairman of the Commission is William A. Anders, a Naval Academy graduate who became an astronaut in 1964 and served as the lunar module pilot in the first manned moon landing. Following that, he became executive secretary of the National Aeronautics and Space Council.

The other members are:

Marcus A. Rowden, a lawyer with the AEC since 1958, and its general counsel at the time of his appointment.

Edward A. Mason, chairman of the Department of Nuclear Engineering at MIT, where he began his career as a research assistant in 1947.

Richard T. Kennedy, a former Army officer and Pentagon official who has been on the staff of the National Security Council since 1969, most recently as deputy assistant for planning.

Victor Gilinsky, head of the physical science depart-

ment of the Rand Corporation, where he has worked since 1961, with several years out to serve with the AEC as special assistant to the Director of Regulation and as a member of the Office of Planning and Analysis.

Hopes that some of the five may emulate the Supreme Court tradition of appointees who suddenly go independent are not baseless, but are close to it. The five are all upward bound careerists, a good way from retirement, and with track records of sound performance in big organizations. Their appointments are from two to five years, and it is doubtful that they will make waves. All have been confirmed by the Senate. The NRC is setting up headquarters at 7920 Norfolk Ave., Bethesda, Md.

Piret Takes ACS Post

Edgar L. Piret, head of the scientific section of the US Embassy in Paris since 1959, is retiring from that post and has been appointed personal assistant to Robert W. Cairns, executive director of the American Chemical Society.

Formerly a professor of chemical engineering at the University of Minnesota, Piret joined the embassy as scientific attache and later was appointed counselor for scientific and technological affairs, a rank that is rare in the American scientific-diplomatic service.

The State Department normally reassigns its scientific personnel every two to four years, but in Piret's case, it was content to leave him in Paris for 15 years. A 1936 Ph.D. graduate of the University of Lyon, Piret (who also holds a Ph.D. from the University of Minnesota) was well-acquainted with the leadership of the French scientific community, and while US ambassadors to France arrived and departed, he stayed on.

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